in comprehensive manner with the help of the State Government in order to work out a time bound action programme; and

(b) if so, by when this study project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (MUFTI MOHD. SAYEED): (a) There is no such proposal under consideration at present.

(b) Does not arise.

Sale of U S dollars by RBI to authorised Dealers

1419. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Reserve Bank to commence sale of US dollars to authorised dealers for transactions; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and what are the details regarding the working of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) At present RBI only spot Pound Sterling to the authorised dealers. Since a large portion of India's trade payment is handled in US Dollers, authorised dealers have to obtain US Dollars for making payments against Pound Sterling acquired from RBI. This process at times can result in loss on accounts of conversion. The Reserve Bank of India is, therefore, considering a proposal for sale of US Dollars to the authorised dealers for transactions denominated in US Dollers only. The question of working out the details of the scheme would arise only after a final decsion is taken by the RBI about the introduction of the scheme.

Child labour in beedi industry

1420. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of child labour engaged in the beedi industry in the country as at present;

(b) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to check the employment of child labour in beedi industry and to ensure health and welfare of the child labour already engaged in this industry;

(c) whether it is a fact that contract labour is also prevalent in beedi industry in the country; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) As estimated by the Ministry of Labour the number of beedi workers in the country is approximately 32.75 lakhs out of which approximately 1 per cent are children.

(b) The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1976 provides that no child below the age of 14 years shall be required or allowed to work in an industrial premises. The Act, however, does not bar children working as home workers.

The Employment of Children Act, 1938, prohibits the employment of children below 14 years in beedi making industry except where such work is carried on by the occupier with the aid of his family only.

As children are not permitted to work in the beedi industry except as part of the family work, no provision has been made relating to their health and welfare.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Contract workers are covered in the definition of "employee" under the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1976 and the relevant provisions of the Act apply to these workers.

Provident fund to beedi workers

1421. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of the States which have implemented the decision as per the Supreme Court judgement regarding coverage of beedi industry under the Employees Provident Fund Act as on date;

(b) what steps Government propose to take for the speedy implementation of the said judgement;

(c) what is the number of beedi workers in the beedi industry who have been issued Identity Cards as on date;

(d) whether it is a fact that employers are not issuing Identity Cards to beedi workers so as to avoid the application of labour laws and other relevant laws; and

(e) if so, what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) The EPF Act is administered by the Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund. The enforcement of the Supreme Court judgement relating to coverage of beedi industry under the EPF Act is, therefore, the responsibility of the Board. The EPF athorities are accordingly taking necessary action in accordance with the provisions of the EPF Act and the Schemes framed thereunder for coverage of beedi industry in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

(c) to (e) There is no provision in the EPF Act for issue of identity cards. Rule 41 of the Beedi Welfare Fund Rules, 1978, however, provides for issue of identity cards to beedi workers by their employers. The employers have, however, issued very few identity cards over the years. The Government is taking steps to enforce this requirement.

Bogus garment exporters

1422. SHRI RAMSINGHBHAI PATALIYABHAI RATHVAKOLI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the "Deccan Herald" of the 4th September, 1986 captioned "70 per cent garment exporters firms are bogus";

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what is the reaction of Government and approved garment exporters thereto;

(c) whether it is a fact that even Export Commissioner has expressed the same viewpoint;

(d) whether Government have made any inquiry into the matter; if so, what are the details of the inquiry and action taken on that basis;

(e) how many such bogus garment exporters have been taken to task and the names and details of such bogus exporters; and

(f) what concrete steps have been taken to end such malpractices?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f) he Export Commissioner while discussing the elements of duty free import scheme had referred to the problem of associate firms in the garment sector. The Government was aware of the problem of associate